

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraph [0018] as follows:

[0018] FIGS. 3A-3C show exemplary cross-sectional views of longitudinal members utilized in the platform shown in ~~FIG. 1~~; FIGS. 1A and 1B;

Please amend paragraph [0024] as follows:

[0024] Referring to ~~FIG. 1~~, FIGS. 1A and 1B, an extensible platform 100 is shown in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. The extensible platform 100 includes a first assembly 102A including a plurality of spaced-apart, longitudinally extending structural members 104. The structural members 104 of the first assembly are interleaved with a corresponding second assembly 102B which includes a plurality of spaced-apart, longitudinally extending structural members 106. For sake of convenience, the longitudinally extending structural members 104 and 106 will be referred to hereinafter as longitudinal members. The longitudinal members 104 of the first assembly 102A are longitudinally slidable relative to the longitudinal members 106 of the second assembly 102B. The relative movement of the first and second assemblies 102A and 102B enable the platform 100 to longitudinally extend and contract and thereby provide a platform of various lengths depending on the various and changing needs of a user of such a platform. It is noted that, while the exemplary embodiment of ~~FIG. 1~~ FIGS. 1A and 1B is described in terms of a plurality of longitudinal members, in another embodiment, each assembly 102A and 102B could include a single longitudinally extending member with, for example, a longitudinally extending member of the first assembly 102A being slidably coupled to the longitudinally extending member of the second assembly 102B as will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art.

Please amend paragraph [0029] as follows:

[0029] A cross member 122 may be coupled to the first assembly 102A adjacent the first lateral support member 108. While not necessarily acting as such, the cross member 122 may also be used as a lateral support member if so desired. One or more self-locking, catch

members 124 are pivotably coupled with the cross member 122. Referring back to ~~FIG. 3,~~ FIG. 2, the cross member 122 may be formed of, for example, tubing extended through corresponding openings in the longitudinal members 104. The cross member 122 may be coupled to at least the outer two longitudinal members 104A and 104B (FIG. 1A) in a manner similar to that of the first lateral support member 108. For example, the cross member 122 may be coupled to the outer longitudinal members 104A and 104B (FIG. 1A) by, for example, swaging the ends of the tubing, by means of adhesive, welding, brazing, or via other mechanical fasteners. In another embodiment, the multiple cross members 122 are each coupled with adjacent longitudinal members 104.

Please amend paragraph [0046] as follows (please note that in printing the amendment dated March 8, 2004, the prime mark failed to print as it appeared in the originally filed application):

[0046] A first flange 194A may be formed at, or coupled to, a first end of the body portion 182 and a second flange 194B may be formed at, or coupled to, a second end of the body portion 182. The sleeve or collar 192 (or the longitudinal member 104A) may exhibit shoulder sections 196A and 196B adjacent the upper surface 134 and the undersurface 136 of the platform-~~100—100'~~, respectively. Thus, with the body portion 182 in the first position 184 projecting from the upper surface 134 of the platform-~~100—100'~~, the lower flange 194B may be received in the shoulder section 196B such that the flange 194B is substantially flush with the undersurface 136. Similarly, when the body portion is in the second position 186, the upper flange 194A may be received in the shoulder section 196A such that the flange 194A is substantially flush with the upper surface 134. In another embodiment, shoulder sections 196A and 196B may not be provided and the flanges may simply abut the sleeve or collar 192 or, depending on the configuration, they may directly abut the upper surface and undersurface 134 and 136 of the platform-~~100—100'~~.

Please amend paragraph [0048] as follows (please note that in printing the amendment dated March 8, 2004, the prime mark failed to print as it appeared in the originally filed application):

[0048] In another embodiment, the body portion 182 may be configured to be slidable relative to the longitudinal member 104A, but only upon application of a force by a user of the platform—~~100~~—100'. For example, the body portion 182 may be sized and configured to provide an interfering fit with the sleeve or collar 192 such that it stays in the first position 184, regardless of the effects of gravity, until a user physically pushes the body portion 182 into the second position 186. With the catch device 180 in the second position 186, it may serve as a catch or stop by engaging the rung 160 of a ladder, or the edge of some other support member, to prevent sliding or “walking” of the platform relative to a support member such as described above herein.